

Slavery
Africa

African Colonization Experience

AFRICAN RECORDS.

Deeds from Negro Princes to Agents of the Colonization Society.

[Reported for the Baltimore Sun.]

The following papers possess interest in connection with the recent address of Mr. J. H. B. Latrobe, at the Maryland Historical Society, on the subject of Maryland in Africa. The papers, as will be seen, are deeds of the land by the princes and head-men of that country to the American Society for African Colonization. The deeds are in possession of an old gentleman of Baltimore, who was at one time engaged in the purchase of old paper, books, etc., for remanufacture into paper. It was in the pursuit of this business that the now faded, musty, yellow and well-worn papers became his property.

The oldest paper in date reads as follows:

Jumbo Town, Grand Bassa, April 12, 1821.—King Ben, of Grand Bassa, with his princes and head-men, the contracting party on one side, and Joseph R. Andrews, first agent of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States, in behalf of said society the contracting party on the other side, being assembled at Jumbo Town, in Grand Bassa, and having given and received assurances of peace and friendship, do assent to the following articles:

Article 1. Grand Bassa belongs to King Ben, his princes and head-men, now present, and no other person or persons has a right to dispose of any part of it without our consent.

Article 2. We unanimously agree to give, grant and convey to the aforesaid Joseph R. Andrews and his successors in office forever, in behalf of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color, for their use and benefit, all the unoccupied land extending east by compass from the salt town situated on the creek the nearest to Jumbo Town, north to the summit of Saddle mountain, or the distance of two or three days' walk, and from this line to the south bank of the St. John's river; and we further agree to warrant and defend this line against all the claims of the neighboring kings, princes and head-men of every foreign power whatsoever.

Article 3. The above-mentioned free people of color shall be entitled to the free use of wood and water, and to all the privileges of the aforesaid land.

Article 4. They shall in no case make war with us, nor in any way, without just cause, trouble us or our people; and we agree never to molest them, but to live in perpetual peace.

Article 5. They nor their agents, nor any living within the settlement, shall be permitted by letter, signal, or in any other way to give notice to ships of war of slave vessels on our coast, so as to cause them to be seized; nor shall they be permitted to use anything but persuasion to cause us to abandon the slave-trade.

Article 6. A suitable number of white people for teachers and agents shall be permitted to live within the settlement.

Article 7. For the above-mentioned Ian King Ben, with his princes and head-men shall receive from the aforesaid agent or his successors in office every dry season the goods specified in the agreement, left in the possession of the King.

Of all the above articles the two contracting parties do bind ourselves to the mutual observance. In testimony of which we here with affix our names.

Joseph Andrews, first agent of the American Colonization Society.

King Jack Ben Grand Bassa,
his X mark.

Young John Prince,
his X mark.

Softly John, King's son,
his X mark.

Young John Ben, King's son,
his X mark.

French Will, Prince,
his X mark.

Young White, Prince,
his X mark.

Jack Gray-Headed Man,
his X mark.

John Sawyer, Prince,
his X mark.

Witness to the above:

Ephraim Baker.

W. Tambe.
William Davis.

Appended to the deed is the following
ARTICLES FOR THE ANNUAL PRESENTS TO
THE KING:

Three hogsheds of tobacco, 1 box pipes, 3 barrels rum, 12 pieces of cotton cloth, 6 bars of iron, 1 box of beads, 50 knives, 50 spoons, 20 looking-glasses, 10 iron pots (different sizes), 12 guns, 3 quarter barrels of gunpowder, 1 military suit for the king, 1 doz. plates, 1 doz. knives and forks, 5 casks of beef, 5 casks of pork, 10 barrels of biscuits, 1 keg of shot, 20 hats, 12 decanters, 12 tumblers, 50 shoes.

Another paper begins: "Know all men that this contract, made on the 15th day of December, 1821, between King Peter, King George, King Zoda, King Long Peter, King Governor and King Jimmy, their princes and head-men, of the one part, and Capt. Robert F. Stockton, and Eli Ayers of the other part, witnesseth," &c. The deed goes on to convey "certain lands in consideration of so much paid in hand, viz: Six muskets, one box beads, pipes, tobacco, gunpowder, bars of iron, twenty looking-glasses, one box soap, three canes, four umbrellas, &c. The grantors pledge themselves to be the owners of the land without limitation, and they further contract not to make war, or otherwise molest or disturb each other."

Batto, Linn.

March 23, 1883

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Slavery African Colonization Mr. Latrobe's Story of

MARYLAND IN LIBERIA.

Mr. John H. B. Latrobe's Interesting Story of the African Colony.

The Maryland Historical Society met last night, with Mr. John H. B. Latrobe, the president, in the chair. Among the members and visitors present were Judge Phelps, ex-Attorney General Isaac D. Jones, Henry Stockbridge, German H. Hunt, Dr. J. P. Thom, George H. Baer, Rev. G. A. Leakin, John Gill (of Gill & Fisher), Wm. White-lock, J. Alexander Shriver, and Secretaries Mendez I. Cohen, W. Hall Harris and Henry C. Wagner. The following active members were elected: Wm. E. Alcock, J. Hough Cottman, John Curlett, Rev. J. H. Eccleston and John A. Hughes. President Latrobe, who seemed in remarkable good health and good humor, sat in his chair and chatted in his usual interesting manner. He said he had endeavored to have the history of Africa written by others, for it was an omitted episode of great interest, but failing, he had undertaken it himself, being the only survivor, with one exception, of the founders of the Maryland Colonization Society. Under an act of the legislature in 1831, it was voted to establish on the west coast of Africa a territory for the extension of liberty, and the sum of \$10,000 a year was pledged for twenty years. Not a vessel or emigrant was lost in twenty years, and in that time it had so grown and prospered as to desire to become independent, and in 1855 the people adopted a constitution of their own by agreement of the Maryland society.

After this introduction Mr. Latrobe excused himself from reading his paper on account of hoarseness, and it was read by Mr. W. Hall Harris. The first movement towards African colonization was when, in 1816, the American Colonization Society sent an agent to the West Coast. The American Colonization Society had auxiliaries in the different states. Messrs. J. H. B. Latrobe, Peter Hoffman and Samuel Baker prepared the constitution to carry on the colonization under the direction of the Maryland Society. It stated that the purpose of the society was the extirpation of slavery by gradual emancipation. The name of the property purchased was Cape Palmas, and it was called Maryland in Liberia. The draft of the constitution was prepared by Mr. Latrobe; it contained forty-five articles. The flag of the settlement was a white cross in the blue field, with the red and white stripes. The brig Ann, of 160 tons, was the first vessel sent out by the Maryland society in November, 1833, and contained Rev. John Hall and other missionaries, and Dr. James Hall as manager. Temperance was a principle engrafted into the rules of the colony, and in the treaty with King Freeman free schools were to be established within a year, and afterwards to be carried on by the American Board of Foreign Missions. In 1853 Mr. Latrobe painted a picture of the society's colony, "Maryland in Liberia," and took it down to Annapolis, where he hung it in the Senate, and members used to console themselves for their \$10,000 a year appropriation by admiring their new dominion. There was a strong feeling in Maryland and Virginia in favor of the emancipation of the slaves, which would probably have taken place at an early date but for the massacre by the negroes in Southampton, Va. A scarcity of provisions was imminent at one time, and the native king threatened to prevent the colonists from trading with other tribes than his; but Captain Hall threatened him with war, and he submitted. John B. Russwom, a colored man, was selected by the society as governor, and made an able, dignified and honest executive. He came to this country, and was given a public dinner by the society in the principal hotel. It became necessary to have a circulating medium, and notes were printed of the denomination of five cents and its multiple, with figures of ducks, goats and other animals to represent the different values. A military company, called the Latrobe Artillery, was organized, and a town was also named after him, and in 1843 a lighthouse was built that could be seen twenty miles at sea. A revenue was necessary at one time, and a tariff was imposed on sales. In 1845, when the financial condition of the state of Maryland was very low, the officers of the state asked if the society could not do without the annual appropriation of \$10,000, but the society replied it could not, and in the cause of freedom and colonization good faith was kept by the state with the society. In 1858 it was reduced to \$5,000 a year, and paid up to 1861, but afterwards discontinued. At the conclusion of the reading, Mrs. Latrobe

was applauded, and Judge Phelps moved a vote of thanks, which was adopted.

The picture which was painted by Mr. Latrobe, in 1833, was upon an easel in the hall, and was examined with much interest.

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March 10.

Liberia, Maryland Colonization of

At a late meeting of the members of the Maryland Historical Society, its President, the Hon. J. H. B. Latrobe, presented an interesting paper on Maryland's connection with the colonization of Africa, he being one of the two survivors of the founders of the Maryland Colonization Society, from the American report of which we quote Under an act of the legislature in 1831, it was voted to establish on the west coast of Africa a territory for the extension of liberty, and the sum of \$10,000 a year was pledged for twenty years. Not a vessel or emigrant was lost in twenty years, and in that time it had so grown and prospered as to desire to become independent, and in 1855 the people adopted a constitution of their own by agreement of the Maryland Society. The first movement towards African colonization was when, in 1816, the American Colonization Society sent an agent to the West Coast. The American Colonization Society had auxiliaries in the different States. Messrs. J. H. B. Latrobe, Peter Hoffman and Samuel Baker prepared the constitution to carry on the colonization under the direction of the Maryland Society. It stated that the purpose of the society was the extirpation of slavery by gradual manumission. The name of the property purchased was Cape Palmas, and it was called Maryland in Liberia. The draft of the constitution was prepared by Mr. Latrobe; it contained forty-five articles. The flag of the settlement was a white cross in the blue field, with the red and white stripes. The brig Ann, of 160 tons, was the first vessel sent out by the Maryland society in November, 1833, and contained Rev. John Hall and other missionaries, and Dr. James Hall, as manager. Temperance was a principle engrafted into the rules of the colony, and in the treaty with King Freeman free schools were to be established within a year, and afterwards to be carried on by the American Board of Foreign Missions. In 1851 Mr. Latrobe painted a picture of the society's colony, "Maryland in Liberia," and took it down to Annapolis, where he hung it in the Senate, and members used to console themselves for their \$10,000 a year appropriation by admiring their new dominion. There was a strong feeling in Maryland and Virginia in favor of the emancipation of the slaves, which would probably have taken place at an early date but for the massacre by the negroes in Southampton, Va. A scarcity of provisions was imminent at one time, and the native king threatened to prevent the colonists from trading with other tribes than his; but Captain Hall threatened him with war, and he submitted. John B. Russwem, a colored man, was selected by the society as governor, and made an able, dignified and honest executive. He came to this country, and was given a public dinner by the society in the principal hotel. It became necessary to have a circulating medium, and notes were printed of the denomination of five cents and its multiple, with figures of ducks, goats and other animals to represent the different values. A military company, called the Latrobe Artillery, was organized, and a town was also named after him, and in 1843 a lighthouse was built that could be seen twenty miles at sea. A revenue was necessary at one time, and a tariff was imposed on sales. In 1845, when the financial condition of the State of Maryland was very low, the officers of the State asked if the society could not do without the annual appropriation of \$10,000, but the society replied it could not, and in the cause of freedom and colonization good faith was kept by the State with the society. In 1858 it was reduced to \$5,000 a year, and paid up to 1861, but afterwards discontinued. The picture which was painted by Mr. Latrobe, in 1883, was upon an easel in the hall, and was examined with much interest.

*Latrobe's picture of
Liberia, March 1883*

Negro Republic Liberia

Die Negro-Republic Liberia.

Die spärlichen Nachrichten über diese von den Vereinigten Staaten aus an der Westküste Afrika's gegründete Republik erschweren eine gute Einsicht in die Verhältnisse derselben. Um so erwünschter ist nachstehende Schilderung, die wir einer kürzlichen Correspondenz der „Völk. Ztg.“ entnehmen. Der Schreiber derselben beschreibt den Präsidenten und die Verwaltung der Republik, wie folgt:

„Hr. Davis, der schwarze „Secretary of State,“ der gleichzeitig Advokat der Firma Wörmann ist, hatte die Freundlichkeit, mich dem Präsidenten der Republik vorzustellen. Ich machte die Bekanntschaft des Hrn. Davis, als ich mich auf dem Postamt vergeblich um Freimarken bewarb — vergeblich, sage ich, denn der Generalpostmeister pflegt, wie man mir erklärte, die Briefmarken mit Ausnahme eines ganz kleinen und eben verbrauchten Vorraths in seiner Briestasche bei sich zu tragen. Hr. Davis aber, der eben aus der nächsten Thür — dieselbe führte in das einzige Zimmer des Ministeriums der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten — heraustrat, nahm sich meiner an und veranlaßte, daß mir einige Tage später der liberianische Stephan nicht bloß Exemplare aller in Liberia gangbaren Marken, sondern auch einige außer Kurs gesetzte Sorten einhändigte. Auf eine Anfrage bei'm Präsidenten ließ dieser durch das vorsehend geschilderte Ministerium des Auswärtigen auf hübsch bedrucktem Briefbogen erwidern, daß er mich um 1 Uhr Nachmittags empfangen werde. Ich fand an ihm einen äußerst liebenswürdigen und auch nach europäischen Begriffen durchaus gebildeten Herrn, wie er denn auch 1862 als Privatsekretär des damaligen Präsidenten Benson Europa durchkreuzt und abermals 1870 in Begleitung des Präsidenten Koye eine Fahrt nach England und Amerika unternommen hat.

Besonders stolz schien Präsident Johnson darauf zu sein, daß er den Fürsten Bismarck persönlich gesehen und von einigen gekrönten Häuptern eigenhändige Schreiben erhalten habe. Er ist der erste im Lande selbst geborene Präsident der Republik, 47 Jahre alt, klein von Wuchs und ebenso, wie der größere, eine Brille tragende Hr. Davis, ziemlich dunkel, ja, beinahe ganz schwarz von Hautfarbe. Während die meisten Liberianer das Englische mit stark ausgeprägtem amerikanischen Klang sprechen, besäßen sich die Vornehmern, und namentlich der Präsident, einer tadellosen Aussprache, verliehen sich vortrefflich auf Höflichkeit und Umgangs-Formen und sind auch fast durchweg gute Redner, selbst in unserem Sinne. Die innere Ausstattung des dem Präsidenten gehörigen Hauses war sehr hübsch, ja, kaum weniger elegant, als die Durchschnitts-Einrichtung einer rheinischen Villa, und ich wundere mich, wie er Das mit seinen 10,000 Mark Einkünften (die Minister erhalten 4000) zu Stande gebracht haben mochte. Auf einem der mit Büchern bedeckten Tische stand eine liberianische Miniatur-Flagge, weiß und roth gestreift mit weißem Stern auf blauem Feld in der einen Ecke — eine Nachbildung der nordamerikanischen Flagge. Gekleidet war Se. Excellenz in schwarzen Gehrock, schwarze Hosen, weiße Weste mit schwerer goldener Ärmelkette und schwarzgewaschtem Stiefel.

Abends speiste ich bei Hrn. Smyth, dem amerikanischen Minister-Residenten und General-Konsul, der, groß, kräftig und gut gekleidet, der am Besten aussehende schwarze Gentleman ist, den ich jemals kennen gelernt habe. Hr. Smyth hat vor Kurzem seine Frau und Tochter nach Amerika gebracht, um sie demnächst auf der Rückkehr von einer beabsichtigten Reise nach Deutschland und England wieder abzuholen, und lebt nun hier mit einem Jahresgehälte von 20,000 M. als Stroh Wittwer. Diesem Einkommen entsprach das nach hiesigen Verhältnissen sehr gute, aus Seezungen, Waldauben, Schinken und Guaven-Kompot bestehende Mahl, zu dem wir Bordeaux, Rheinwein und Port tranken. Nach Tische zeigte mir Hr. Smyth das in Deutschland gemalte Bild seiner schwarzen Mutter und las mir unter häufigen Befehlen an die Kru-Diener und die liberianische Haushälterin seine letztjährigen Konsulsberichte vor, die ich genau ebenso inhaltreich fand, wie sie etwa ein europäischer Konsul abgefaßt haben würde, und auch deshalb hochschätzte, weil Hr. Smyth als einziger Berufs-Konsul besser, als seine kaufmännischen Kollegen von Deutschland, Holland, Belgien und Schweden zum Sammeln statistischen Materials aufgelegt ist.

Vom Ackerbau habe ich in der Nähe Monrovia's nur wenig gesehen, obwohl hier allwärts und noch besser ein wenig landeinnahäris Kaffee, Zuckerröhre, Baumwolle, Reis, Ingwer und Arrowroot, Bananen, Orangen und Ananas gedeihen könnten. Der Ackerbau, wie er in Liberia betrieben wird, reicht auch nicht annähernd für die Bedürfnisse des Landes aus, und wenn es auch einige hübsche Plantagen gibt, so bezieht doch das Land seine Bedürfnisse vorwiegend mit dem Exporte jener Delpalmen und Kautschuk-Platanen, die einschießen in der Wildnis noch

so häufig sind, daß man sie gar nicht anzupflanzen braucht. Unter den Kaffeepflanzungen des Landes ist die bei Kap Palmas gelegene, welche der schwarzen Wittve eines Franzosen (Frau Verdier) gehört, die bestgehalten; in zweiter Linie kommen die am St. Pauls-Fluß gelegenen Kaffee- und Zucker-Plantagen von Decourcy, W. D. Coleman, Moses Rix und Henry Cooper & Sohn (latter Schwarzen). Als Arbeiter verwendet man sogenannte Knaben (boys), d. h. Eingeborene, die aus dem Innern bezogen werden (weil alle halbwilden Stämme in der Fremde besser arbeiten, als daheim) und durch Verschulden allmählich in eine der Leibeigenschaft nicht ganz unähnliche Stellung gerathen.

Noch trauriger, als mit dem Ackerbau steht es mit der Viehzucht aus. Während es auf der Hochebene der Mandingos viele Pferde, Kühe, Schaafe und Ziegen giebt, ist vor Kurzem in Liberia das letzte noch übrige, einem Weißen gehörige Pferd verendet. Die immer wieder auf's Neue in das Land eingeführten Pferde erliegen nicht sowohl dem Klima, als dem gänzlichen Mangel an Pflege. So lange die Europäer selbst sich mit ihnen beschäftigen, befinden sich die Thiere ganz wohl; die Kru wissen aber ganz und gar nicht mit Pferden umzugehen, füttern dieselben mit ungeeignetem Material und veranlassen, sobald einmal der weiße Herr verreckt ist oder krank wird, binnen kürzester Zeit deren Tod. Die wenigen Kühe in Mon-

haben eine Zwergrasse und geben keine Milch, auch die sehr großen Ziegen werden bloß des Fleisches halber gehalten, die Schaf-
ne sind halb verwildert, und die wenigen Schaafe haben straffes Haar, aber keine Wolle.

Will man die zukünftigen Reichthümer Liberia's aufzählen, so dürfen doch auch die unzweifelhaft vorhandenen Metallschätze nicht übergangen werden. Gold wächst man an einigen Flüssen, vornehmlich in Grand-Bassa, und Eisenerz ist in uner schöplicher Fülle mit einem Gehalt von 50 bis 90 Prozent am Oberlauf des St. Paulsflusses vorhanden. West-Afrika ist kein Eldorado, aber es umschließt noch viele ungehobene Reichthümer, deren Existenz nicht bloß geahnt wird, sondern über die man schon ziemlich genau Bescheid weiß."

Deutsche Correspondent.
Dec 24 1884

